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Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Nuclear issues

Working paper submitted by China

1. The Chinese delegation submitted five working papers to the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, respectively on security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, peaceful uses of nuclear energy, nuclear-weapon-free zones and nuclear issues in the Middle East, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and nuclear disarmament and reducing the danger of nuclear war (NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/WP.32, NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/WP.33, NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/WP.34, NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/WP.35 and NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/WP.36), which comprehensively elaborated China's principal views on related issues. On that basis, the Chinese delegation would like to emphasize the following aspects:

(a) The international community should cultivate the awareness of a community of shared future for the security of mankind, stick to multilateralism in the field of security and promote the building of an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity;

(b) All countries should discard the cold war mentality and zero-sum thinking, advocate and pursue common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security and be committed to resolving differences through consultation and settling disputes through dialogue;

(c) Countries should respect the role of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime, promote its three pillars in a comprehensive and balanced manner and maintain and strengthen the authority, universality and effectiveness of the Treaty by opposing double standards and pragmatism. Countries that have not yet acceded to the Treaty should unconditionally do so as non-nuclear-weapon States at an early date.

I. Nuclear non-proliferation

2. The root causes of the proliferation of nuclear weapons are complex. International efforts should be made to address both symptoms and root causes of

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nuclear proliferation through a holistic approach. Firstly, countries should strive to achieve universal security and eliminate root causes of nuclear proliferation. Secondly, countries should stick to the peaceful settlement of nuclear proliferation issues through political and diplomatic means. Thirdly, countries should abandon double standards and pragmatism and uphold the authority of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and continuously reinforce its impartiality, rationality and non-discrimination. Fourthly, countries should handle the relationship between nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy in a fair and balanced manner.

3. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear issue is a model for preventing nuclear proliferation through political and diplomatic means. To ensure the faithful and long-term implementation of the Plan of Action is of great significance for strengthening the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and promoting peace and stability in the Middle East. Recently, the Plan of Action has been facing increased uncertainty. With the aim of maintaining overall benefits of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, all relevant parties should manage and resolve disputes through dialogues and consultations so as to maintain the integrity and credibility of the Plan of Action.

4. To promote the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula serves the security interests of the region and the world at large. Currently, the situation on the Peninsula has witnessed a hard-won relaxation. All parties involved should seize the opportunity and move in the same direction. They should follow the "dual-track approach" by promoting denuclearization and the establishment of a peace mechanism in the Peninsula simultaneously in order to forge a future featuring lasting peace and stability.

5. The safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are an important component of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. All parties should support IAEA to constantly improve in an impartial, objective and transparent manner the efficiency and effectiveness of safeguards.

6. The establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction relates not only to peace and stability in the region, but also the authority of the review process of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In this regard, all relevant parties are encouraged to take flexible and practical measures to strive to break the deadlock and convene the postponed international conference on this issue at an early date.

II. Nuclear disarmament

7. The international community should pay attention to strategic issues that may have a negative impact on nuclear disarmament. Development or deployment of global missile defence systems should be stopped and abandoned immediately. Besides, all States should work together to prevent the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space, prevent the high-tech arms race from aggravating the international strategic imbalance, maintain the global strategic balance and stability and create an international security environment necessary for nuclear disarmament.

8. Nuclear-weapon States should concretely undertake their responsibilities, be committed to the ultimately complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, faithfully fulfil their nuclear disarmament obligations under Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and publicly commit not to seek permanent possession of nuclear weapons. Nuclear-weapon States should reduce the role of nuclear weapons in national security doctrines, abandon the nuclear deterrence policy based

on first use of nuclear weapons and abandon the policy and practice of the nuclear umbrella and the practice of nuclear sharing. Nuclear-weapon States should continue to observe their moratoriums on nuclear tests, refrain from researching or developing new types of nuclear weapons and stop deploying nuclear weapons abroad. Nuclear-weapon States should honour their commitments not to target their nuclear weapons at any countries and explicitly undertake unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones. They should support the negotiation and conclusion of international legal instruments on the issues of negative security assurances and no-first-use of nuclear weapons. Nuclear-weapon States should take all steps necessary to avoid accidental or unauthorized launches of nuclear weapons and ensure the security of facilities related to nuclear weapons. States possessing the largest nuclear arsenals bear special and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament and should take the lead in substantially reducing those nuclear arsenals in a verifiable, irreversible and legally binding manner.

9. Nuclear disarmament should follow the principles of "maintaining global strategic stability" and "undiminished security for all" and be pursued in a step-by-step manner within existing disarmament negotiation mechanisms. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is an important step in the nuclear disarmament process. All signatory States should strengthen their political and financial support to it. Recently, a batch of International Monitoring System monitoring stations in China has been certified by the Provisional Technical Secretariat, which reflects China's firm support to the Treaty. The Conference on Disarmament is the sole appropriate forum for the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group should proceed in strict accordance with its mandate, defined in General Assembly resolution 71/259, so as to ensure that its outcome would be conducive to the authority of the Conference on Disarmament. Nuclear disarmament verification involves sensitive information on nuclear weapons. Related research and discussion on this issue should not hamper the security interests of nuclear-weapon States, and strict non-proliferation measures should be adopted therein.

III. Peaceful uses of nuclear energy

10. Nuclear energy is of great importance in ensuring energy security, mitigating climate change and achieving sustainable development. The peaceful use of nuclear energy is an inalienable right of the States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons should not undermine the legitimate rights of States parties, particularly developing countries, to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. China will continue to steadily advance nuclear power construction, build up a clean and safe, low-carbon and highly efficient modern energy mix and promote the development of nuclear energy in the whole world.

11. Safety and security are basic prerequisites for the development and utilization of nuclear energy. The international community should adhere to the rational, coordinated and progressive nuclear security concept and step up political input, national responsibility, international cooperation and nuclear security culture. China has always attached great importance to nuclear safety and has carried the Nuclear Safety Law into effect since January 2018. China will continue to ensure the safe and reliable operation of nuclear facilities through effective regulation and scientific management.

12. China actively promotes international cooperation on nuclear safety and security and advocates the cause of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In March 2018, China hosted the fifth Asia-Europe Meeting seminar on nuclear safety in order to promote nuclear safety cooperation and boost green growth in Asia and Europe. In April 2018, China and the United States of America jointly hosted the Nuclear Security Contact Group workshop on regional capacity-building and cooperation with the aim of promoting regional cooperation on nuclear security capacity-building and constructing a nuclear security capacity-building network. China attaches great importance to international cooperation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy and stands ready to work with all States parties to make the whole world enjoy the benefit of nuclear energy.